

NORFOLK, VIRGINIA

REGULAR SESSION OF COUNCIL

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2012

City Council met on this date in joint session with members of the school board, the superintendent and other school administration members.

Mayor Fraim called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m. with all members present. Also present were the following members of the school board: Dr. Kirk T. Houston, Sr., Chair, Rodney Jordan, Reverend Edward Haywood, Dr. Noelle Gabriel, Dr. Stephen Tonelson, Dr. Brad Robinson and Dr. Warren Stewart.

He thereupon welcomed the school board and called on School Board Chair, Dr. Kirk Houston, for opening remarks.

Dr. Houston offered an overview of the meeting agenda and called on Superintendent, Dr. Samuel King for his presentation.

Dr. King reported as follows:

- He reviewed the demographic composition of the student body.
- 14 schools lack accreditation and the State is changing the SOL test in English and Science.
- Board and division priorities were reviewed and include ensuring full accreditation, increase student academic achievement and improve climate, safety and attendance.

Dr. Linda Sevigny, Deputy Superintendent of Teaching and Learning reported on common formative and benchmark assessments. Major points reviewed:

- The process was developed by teachers to gauge student progress.
- Benchmarking was created by the central office to determine how students are progressing and after analyzing results instructional directions are implemented to enhance quality and rigor previous quarter of study.

Next, L'Tanya Simmons, Deputy Superintendent of Operations and School Leadership Development provided a review of Achieve3000 Program and how an on-line learning and school leadership program is assisting student increase their Lexile scores.

Mr. Smigiel asked if the school's infrastructure has been assessed to ensure they can handle the computers.

Ms. Rhonda Ingram, Acting Chief Financial Officer, provided an update on the school system's budget planning as follows:

- Program evaluations will be conducted on elementary reading and math and middle school quality education program.
- There was a \$3.35 million carry forward from FY 2012.

Mayor Fraim asked how much the budget improved this year.

Dr. Simmons reported as follows on Capital Improvements:

- A chronology was presented on adoption of the K-8 model and the priority setting for four K-8 schools that concluded with the board's October 2012 decision to delay issuing an RFP for design of Campostella and Broad Creek Schools as K-5.
- National research links K-8 schools to academic success and improvements in on-time graduation rates.
- The board has decided to build a K-8 STEM swim school in Campostella with a September 2015 opening planned; to build Broad Creek as a PreK-5 IB – math and science school with the option to expand to Grade 8 with opening projected for September 2015, Ocean View is planned as a K-5 and is Larchmont.

Mr. Smigiel asked why the board is not discussing closing smaller schools in light of declining enrollment and new school construction. Dr. Houston agreed that closing schools has been part of the discussion.

Mr. Smigiel suggested that the MGT' study should be re-examined and updated, commenting the results of the study were never implemented and has concerned many citizens particularly over the change in construction priorities.

Mr. Burfoot asked for an understanding of what the board hopes to achieve with the K-8 strategy and expressed his concern that K-8's may not have the same program opportunities as middle schools and asked if anyone was looking at the number for how many want to enroll in such programs as the international program.

Council discussion ensued:

City Council stressed that consistent plans and precise cost estimates are needed before they can ask citizens to support a tax increase that would fund school construction and improvements.

Councilman Smigiel asked that the new schools as well as the renovated buildings be equipped to handle current technology.

Councilman Riddick asked that the city explore contracting with ODU, TCC and Norfolk State to provide space for early childhood centers.

Councilman Riddick expressed concerns about high school redistricting. He stressed that great care should be taken to ensure that not all students from Tidewater Park, Calvert Park, Campostella Heights, Campostella, Brambleton, Young Park and Berkley would attend Booker T. Washington High School.

Mayor Fraim commented that dialog is needed to determine what will be the best site for a new Tidewater Park Elementary School due to flooding issues.

Councilman Protogyrou stated that the citizenry have asked that a community center be built along with the new Ocean View Elementary School. He noted that the existing senior center by the golf course and therapeutic center at Northside are in older buildings. He asked that we examine incorporating all three in the new community center.

Councilwoman Whibley stressed that when looking forward to building more than one school to be mindful of unnecessary duplication.

Along with new school buildings, Councilwoman Williams stressed the importance of academic excellence and restoring schools to full accreditation.

Councilwoman Whibley stressed that as we look forward to building new schools that we also need to take into consideration the launching of our new initiative on poverty and how that relates to providing better education and technical skills to our citizens that will result in jobs and careers that will move our district ahead.

Mayor Fraim asked how much the school's budget improved over this year in terms of dollars. He also, emphasized to the board and superintendent that it is vitally important that the city be provided with accurate and compressive data on construction costs for new schools, noting furniture, fixtures and technology were not included in today's figures.

Mr. Protogyrou urged the board to request the full extent of the school system's needs when submitting the budget.

With no further business remaining, the meeting was adjourned.